War against terrorism by Pakistan

*269. SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that JKLF leader Yasin Malik confessed before the media during his visit to Islamabad in June, 2005 that Pakistan Information Minister is the person in-charge of terrorist training camps across our international border;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the ground reality, revealed by the confession, has been contrary to the assurances given by the Pakistan President in January, 2004;

(d) whether Government confronted Pakistani administration with it, besides the international community engaged in war against terrorism; and

(e) if so, the details thereof, including response of the respective Governments in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) to (e) Media reports indicate that JKLF leader Yasin Malik had told the media, at a meeting during an exhibition in Islamabad on June 13, 2005, that Pakistan Information Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed had set up a camp for training militants in Pakistan.

Government has stated that this revelation was a matter of great concern. It was particularly serious that people directly involved in such activities continued to occupy high positions in Pakistan. Government's stand remains that no effective action has been taken by Pakistan to dismantle the infrastructure of support to terrorism on a permanent basis. Government has, in its interaction with Pakistan at all levels, continuously stressed the fact that Pakistan has so far not taken any significant action to dismantle the infrastructure of support to terrorism, such as communications, launching pads, training camps, funding, etc. Government has made it clear to Pakistan that the premise on which the present dialogue process is based is the commitment of January 6, 2004 by Pakistan not to permit any territory under Pakistan's control to be used to support terrorism in any manner.

Pakistan has denied that Sheikh Rashid had been running terrorist training camps.

Recruitment of drivers by KGL

*270. SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS AND INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the renewed activities of Kuwait and Gulf Link Transport Company of Kuwait to recruit drivers and other categories of workers for Iraq; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government to safeguard Indian citizens from being lured into hazardous employment in Iraq?

THE PRIME MINISTER (DR. MANMOHAN SINGH): (a) and (b) :

1. There have been Press reports about M/s. Kuwait and Gulf Link Transport Co., Kuwait (KGL) recruiting truck and trailer drivers for Iraq.

2. KGL had been placed in the Prior Approval Category (PAC) in 2001. It was removed from the PAC list in Nov. 2004 on the recommendation of the Embassy of India, Kuwait.

3. In the wake of recent Press reports about the activities of KGL, all Protectors of Emigrants have been directed not to grant emigration clearance at their level w.e.f. 22.07.2005 to Indian workers proposed to be deployed by KGL but refer the proposals to the Protector General of Emigrants.

4. Further, the practice of a specific endorsement "NOT VALID FOR TRAVEL TO IRAQ" on the passports of workers going to Kuwait and Jordan, has been extended to all workers going to all Gulf countries.

Country among maritime nations

*271. PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether despite the long coastline, India is not rated among the top 20 maritime nations; and